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Majd et al.

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(54) **SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR MATCHING CALL DETAIL RECORDS FOR THE SAME COMMUNICATION GENERATED BY DIFFERENT ELEMENTS OF AN IP TELEPHONY SYSTEM**

USPC 379/111, 151.01, 121.01, 121.05, 126;
370/352–357, 401, 402
See application file for complete search history.

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H04M 15/00 (2006.01)

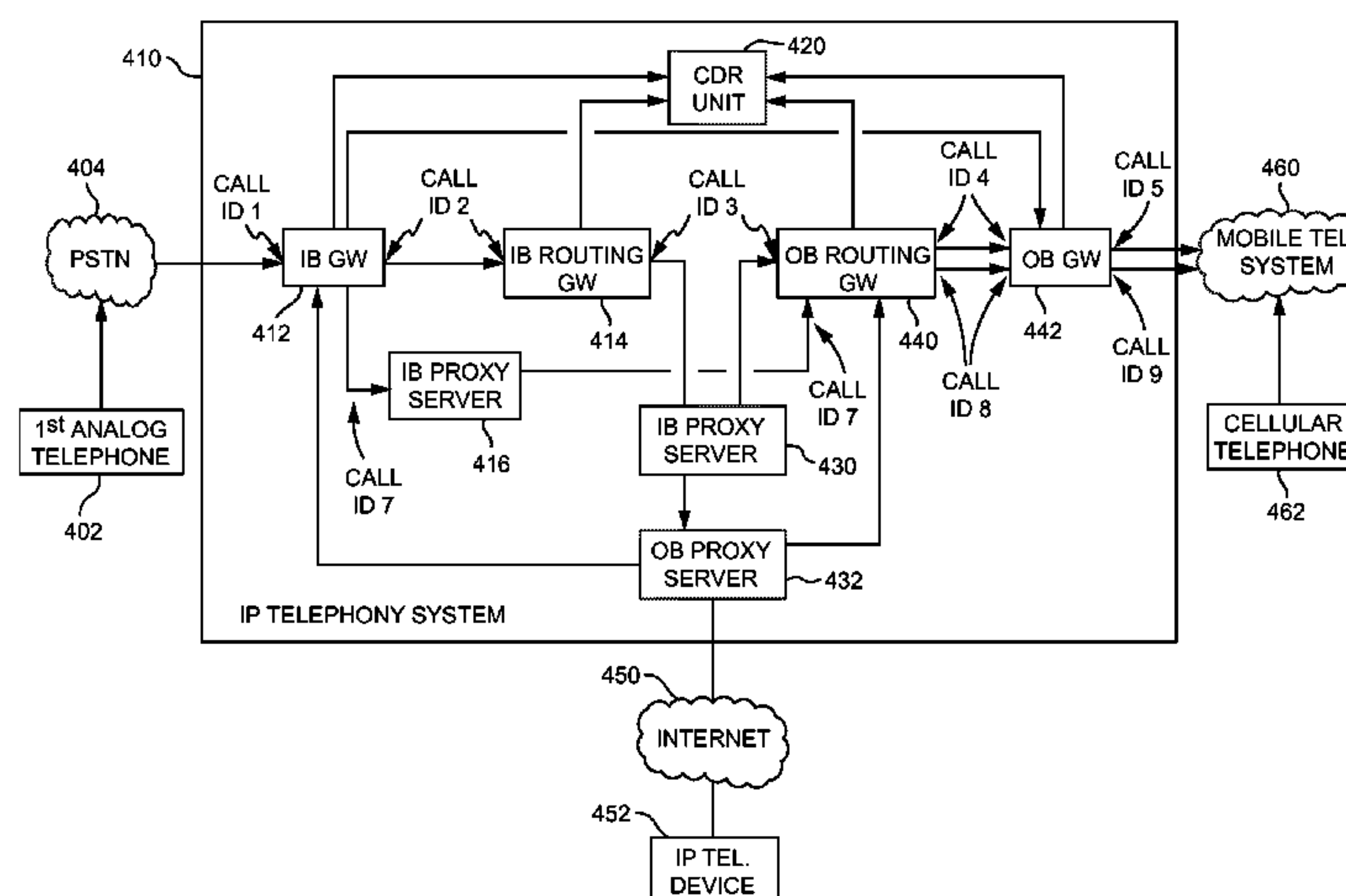
(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **H04M 15/41** (2013.01); **H04M 15/43** (2013.01); **H04M 15/56** (2013.01); **H04M 15/62** (2013.01); **H04M 15/67** (2013.01);
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

Call detail records (CDRs) that are generated by different elements of an IP telephony system in connection with the same communication can be matched to one another using timing information contained in the CDRs. Other information in addition to timing information, and which is present in two CDRs relating to the same communication may be used in conjunction with timing information to match CDRs from the same communication. Also, information relating to the type of flow path that a communication follows through the elements of an IP telephony system may also be recorded in a final CDR that is created for each communication.

21 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets



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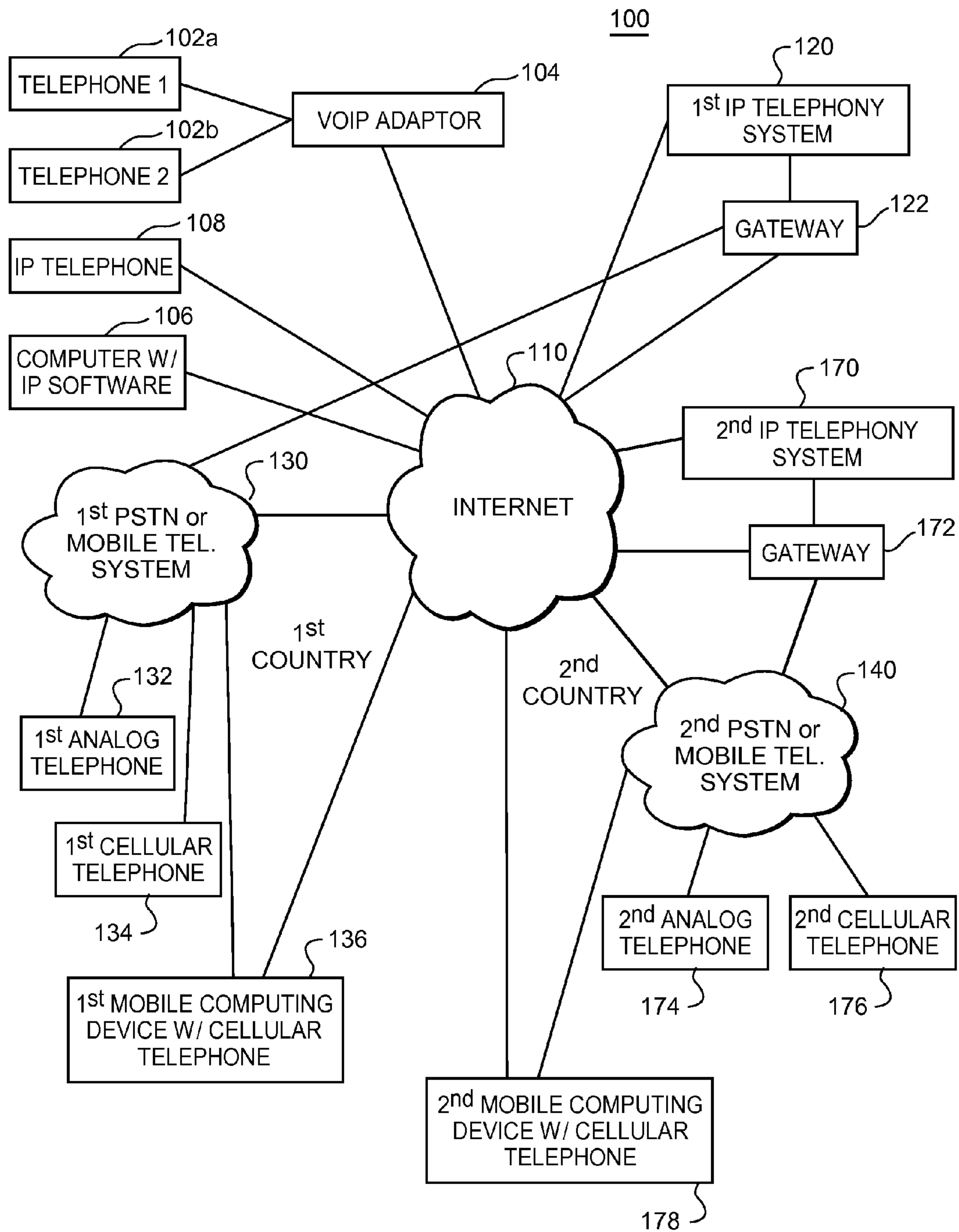


FIGURE 1

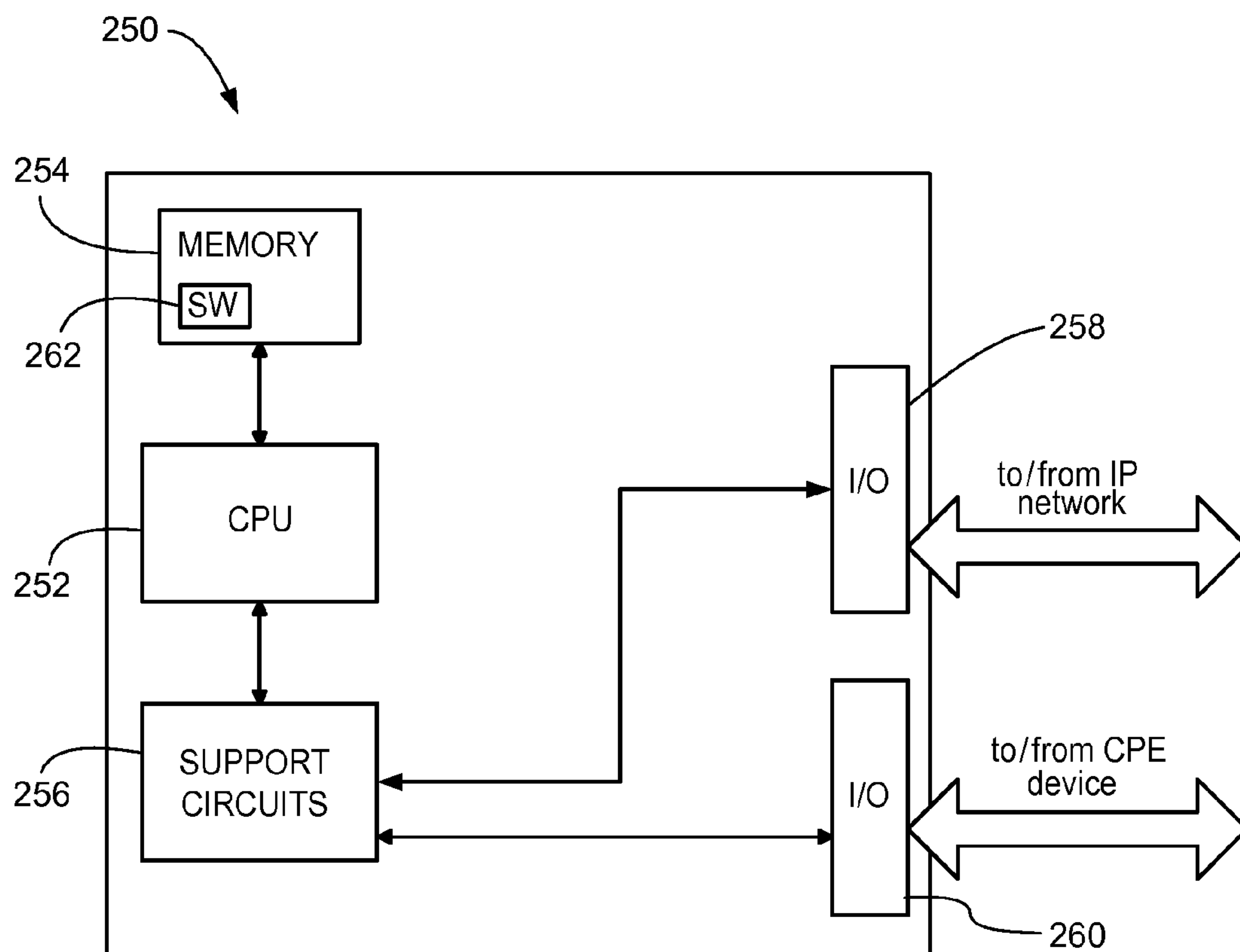


FIGURE 2

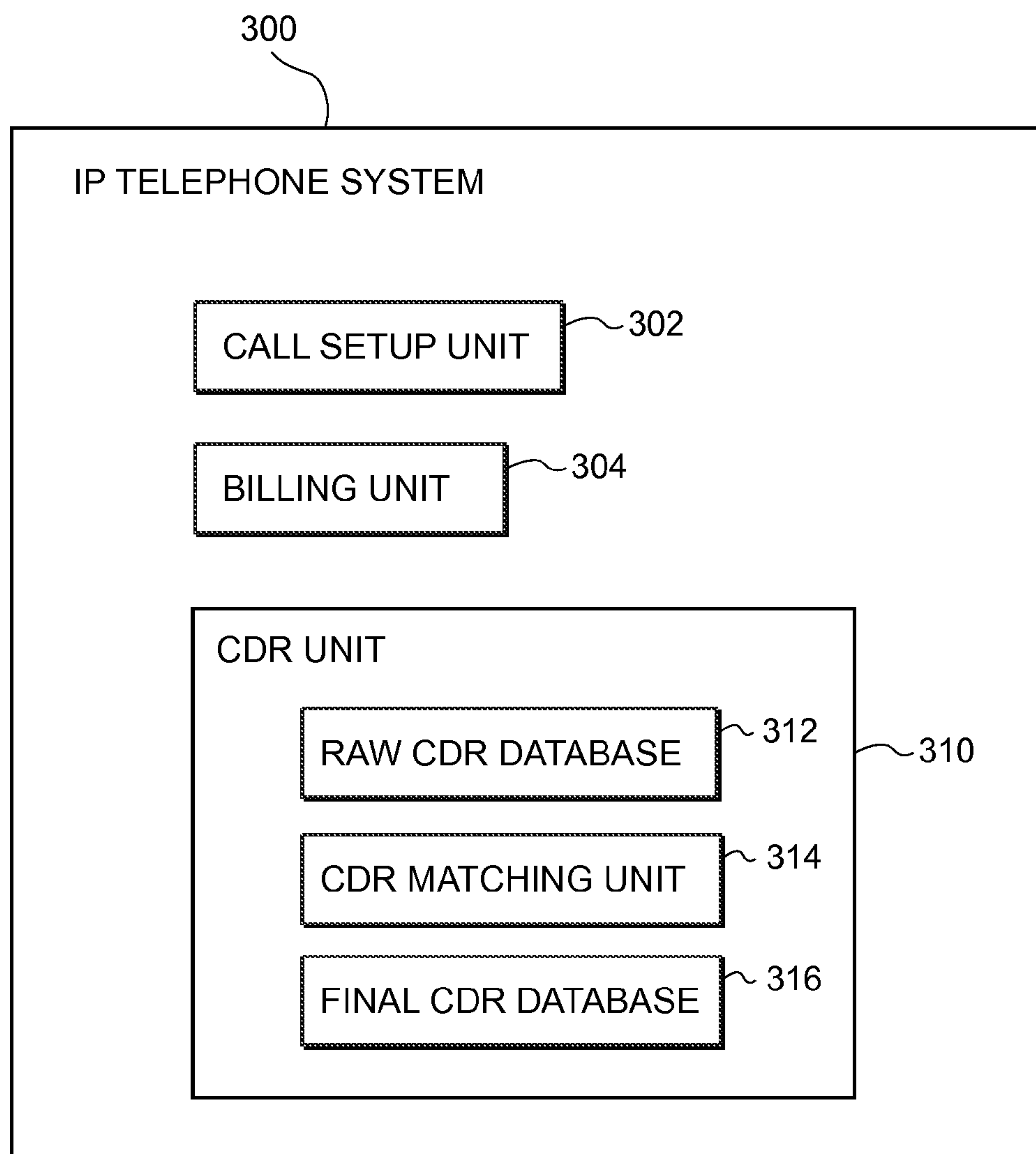


FIGURE 3

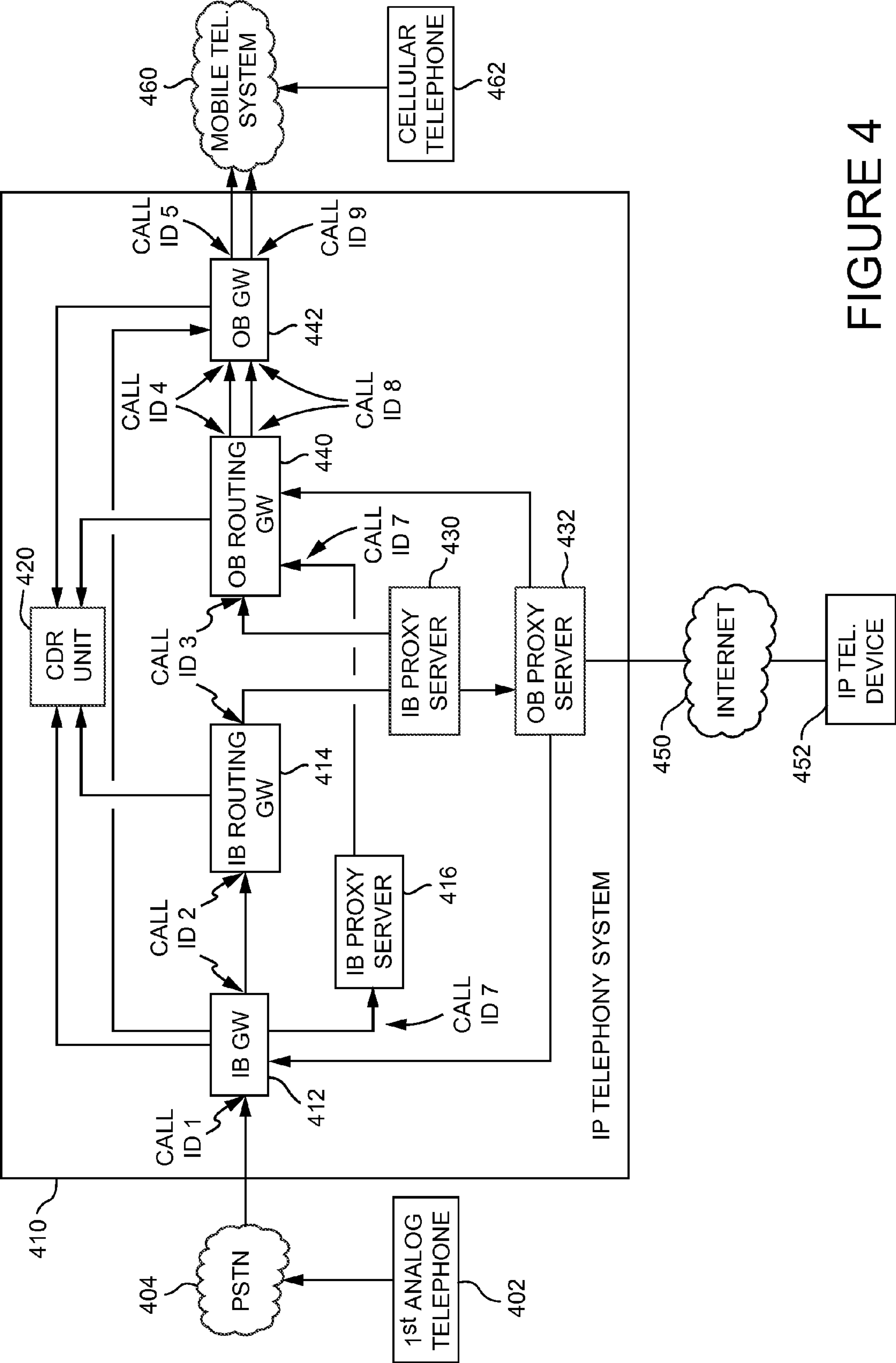


FIGURE 4

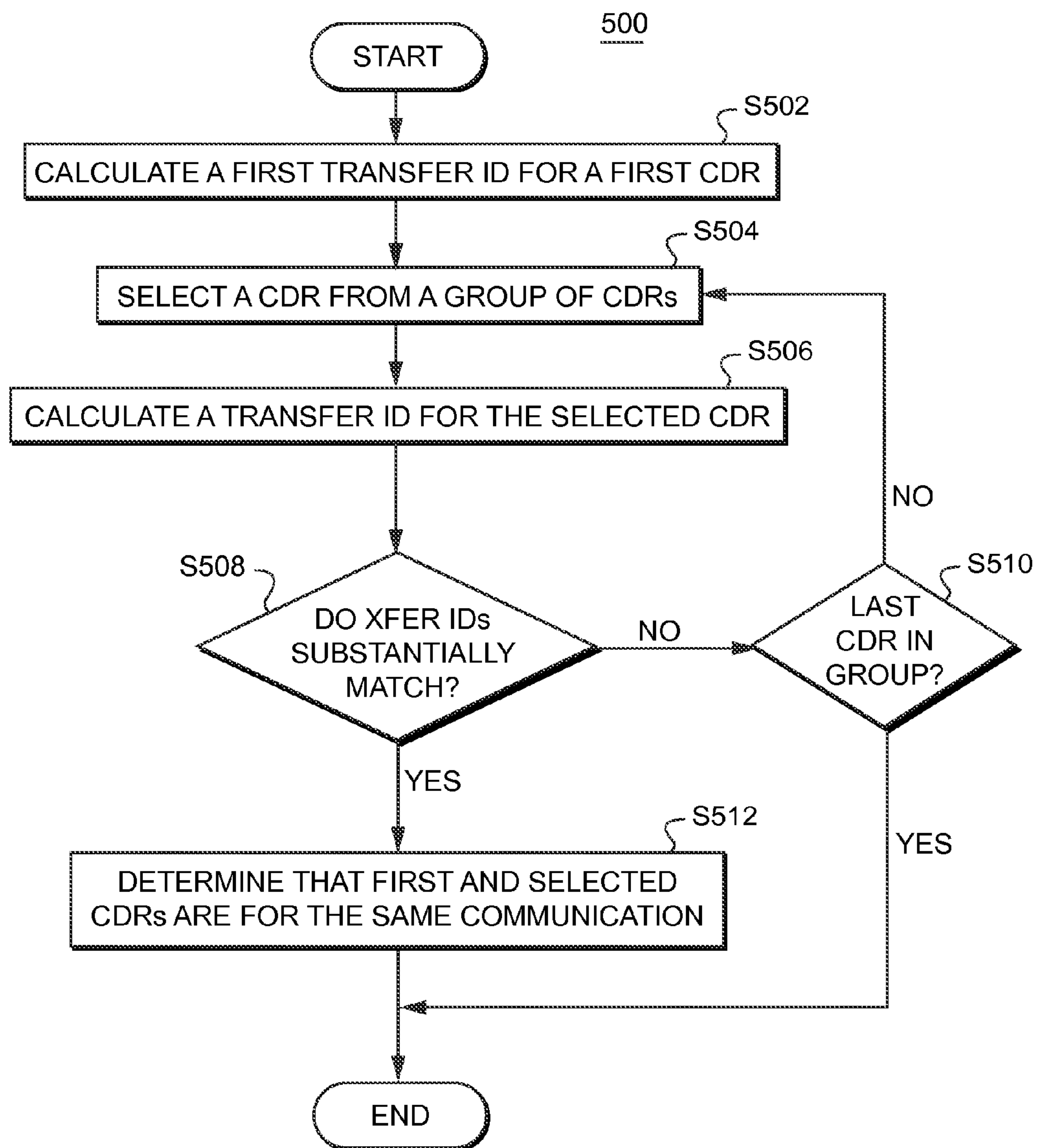


FIGURE 5

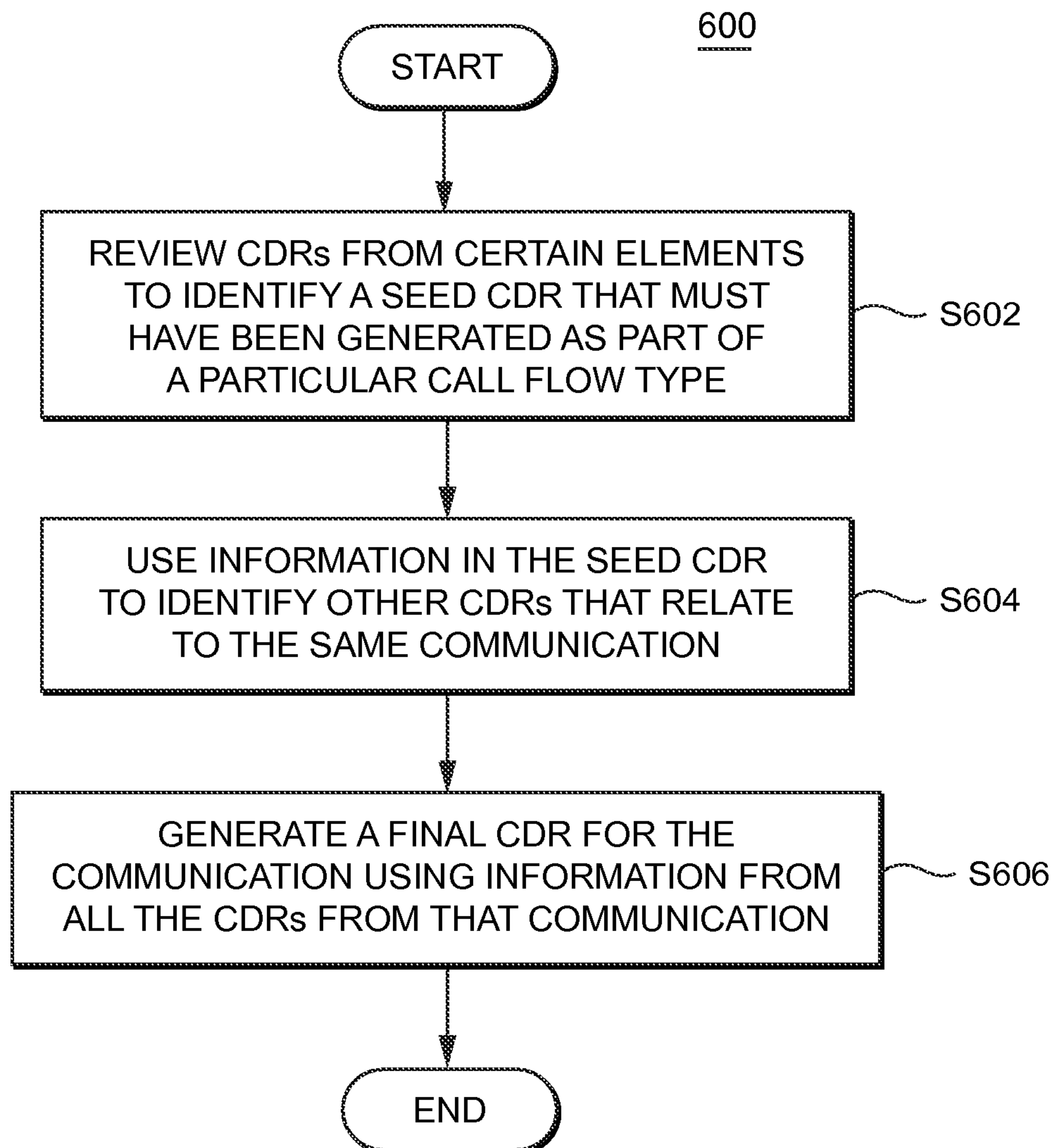


FIGURE 6

SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR MATCHING CALL DETAIL RECORDS FOR THE SAME COMMUNICATION GENERATED BY DIFFERENT ELEMENTS OF AN IP TELEPHONY SYSTEM

This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. application Ser. No. 13/837,603, filed Mar. 15, 2013, the entire content of which is hereby incorporated by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The invention is related to Internet Protocol (IP) telephony systems. More specifically, the invention is related to telephony devices and methods of routing telephony communications via an IP telephony system.

When an IP telephony system receives an incoming communication, the communication can be routed through multiple elements of the IP telephony system before the call is either terminated to a customer telephony device, or passed off to another telephony system. In some instances, multiple ones of the elements which handle the incoming communication each generate a call detail record (CDR) containing various pieces of information about the communication. Each element that generates a CDR sends the CDR to a central CDR unit of the IP telephony system.

Also, a single element that is responsible for handling a communication can generate both a start CDR and a stop CDR for the communication. Thus, a single element may generate two CDRs for the communication, each of which include different items of information about the communication.

When multiple elements of an IP telephony system each generate a different CDR relating to the same communication, it is desirable for the CDR unit to match the different CDRs that are related to the same communication. Matching the various CDRs related to a single incoming communication is helpful in determining which elements of the IP telephony system were responsible for handling the communication, which can be helpful in troubleshooting when problems arise. Also, information collected from all of the CDRs can be useful in billing for the communication. Information contained in the various different CDRs also can be aggregated into a single final CDR for the communication, and the final CDR can be used for billing purposes, quality monitoring and assurance, and troubleshooting. For all these reasons, it is desirable to have systems and methods which can match multiple CDRs generated by different elements of the IP telephony system, but which all relate to the same communication.

In some instances, it is possible to link multiple different CDRs which have been created for the same telephony communication using call identification number information contained in the CDRs themselves. However, in some types of call flows, it is not possible to use the call identification number information in the CDRs to link all the CDRs that relate to a single communication.

In view of the foregoing, it is desirable to find an alternate method for linking a plurality of CDRs which have been generated by various elements of an IP telephony system, but which all relate to the same telephony communication.

Moreover, certain types of communication traffic will follow the same basic flow path through the elements of the IP telephony system. Although the actual physical devices that are used to carry each communication can vary from communication to communication, the basic flow paths are the same. It would be desirable to record the type of flow path that each

communication follows in the final CDR that is created for the communication. However, determining the actual type of flow path that each communication follows can be difficult.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a diagram of a communications environment including various elements which are associated with an Internet protocol (IP) telephony system operating in accordance with one embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a diagram of various elements of a processor that forms part of an IP telephony system in accordance with one embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 3 is a block diagram illustrating selected elements of an IP telephony system in accordance with one embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 4 is a diagram illustrating the call flow paths which can be traversed by a communication through elements of an IP telephony system in accordance with one embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 5 is a flow diagram illustrating steps of a method of matching call detail records that are for the same communication and which have been generated by different elements of an IP telephony system in accordance with one embodiment of the invention; and

FIG. 6 is a flow diagram illustrating steps of a method of identifying a seed CDR for a communication that follows a particular type of flow path, and for then identifying all related CDRs and creating a final CDR for the communication.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The following detailed description of preferred embodiments refers to the accompanying drawings, which illustrate specific embodiments of the invention. Other embodiments having different structures and operations do not depart from the scope of the present invention.

In the following description, the terms VOIP system, VOIP telephony system, IP system and IP telephony system are all intended to refer to a system that connects callers and that delivers data, text or video communications using Internet protocol data communications.

As illustrated in FIG. 1, a communications environment **100** is provided to facilitate IP based communications. A first IP telephony system **120** enables connection of telephone calls between its own customers and other parties via data communications that pass over a data network. The data network is commonly the Internet **110**, however, private data networks may form all or a portion of the data communication path. The first IP telephony system **120** is connected to the Internet **110**.

In addition, the first IP telephony system **120** is connected to a first publicly switched telephone network (PSTN) **130**, a second PSTN **140**, and a second IP telephony system **170**. This allows the first IP telephony system **120** to receive telephony communications from and send telephony communications to each of these other communications systems. In some instances, the first IP telephony system **120** would receive an incoming communication directed to one of its own customers from one of these other communications system. The first IP telephony system **120** then terminates the call to the customer's telephony device. In other instances, the first IP telephony system may setup an outgoing call from one of its customers to a customer of one of these other communications systems. In still other instances, the first IP tele-

phony system **120** may act as an intermediate party to connect a communication between two of these other communications systems.

In some instances, the first IP telephony system **120** accesses the Internet **110** via a gateway **122**. The gateway **122** allows users and devices that are connected to the first and second PSTNs **130**, **140** and/or the second IP telephony system **170** to connect with users and devices that are reachable through the first IP telephony system **120**, and vice versa. In some instances, the gateway **122** would be a part of the first IP telephony system **120**. In other instances, the gateway **122** could be maintained by a third party.

Customers of the first IP telephony system **120** can place and receive telephone calls using an IP telephone **108** that is connected to the Internet **110**. Such an IP telephone **108** could be connected to an Internet service provider via a wired connection or via a wireless router. In some instances, the IP telephone **108** could utilize a cellular telephone system to access the Internet **110**.

Alternatively, a customer could utilize an analog telephone **102a** which is connected to the Internet **110** via a terminal adapter **104**. The terminal adapter **104** converts analog signals from the telephone **102a** into data signals that pass over the Internet **110**, and vice versa. Also, as illustrated in FIG. 1, multiple analog telephones **102a** and **102b** could all be coupled to the same terminal adaptor **104**. Analog telephone devices include, but are not limited to, standard telephones and document imaging devices such as facsimile machines. A configuration using a terminal adapter **104** is common where all of the analog telephones **102a**, **102b** are located in a residence or business, and all of the telephones are connected to the same terminal adapter. With this configuration, all of the analog telephones **102a**, **102b** share the same telephone number assigned to the terminal adaptor **104**. Other configurations are also possible where multiple communication lines (e.g., a second telephone number) are provisioned by the IP telephony system **120**.

In addition, a customer could utilize a soft-phone client running on a computer **106** to place and receive IP based telephone calls, and to access other IP telephony systems. In some instances, the soft-phone client could be assigned its own telephone number. In other instances, the soft-phone client could be associated with a telephone number that is also assigned to an IP telephone **108**, or to a terminal adaptor **104** that is connected to one or more analog telephones **102a**, **102b**.

A third party using the first analog telephone **132** which is connected to the first PSTN **130** may call a customer of the IP telephony system **120**. In this instance, the call is initially connected from the first analog telephone **132** to the first PSTN **130**, and then from the first PSTN **130**, through the gateway **122** to the first IP telephony system **120**. The first IP telephony system **120** then routes the call to the customer's IP telephony device. A third party using the first cellular telephone **134** could also place a call to an IP telephony system customer, and the connection would be established in a similar manner, although the first link would involve communications between the first cellular telephone **134** and a cellular telephone network. For purposes of this explanation, the cellular telephone network is considered part of the first PSTN **130**.

In addition, mobile computing devices which include cellular telephony capabilities could also be used to place telephone calls to customers of the IP telephony system. A first mobile computing device **136**, as illustrated in FIG. 1, might connect to the first PSTN **130** using its cellular telephone capabilities. However, such devices might also have the abil-

ity to connect wirelessly via some other means. For example, the mobile computing device **136** might communicate with a wireless data router to connect the first mobile computing device **136** directly to a data network, such as the Internet **110**.

In this instance, communications between the first mobile computing device **136** and other parties could be entirely carried by data communications which pass from the first mobile computing device **136** directly to a data network **110**. Of course, alternate embodiments could utilize any other form of wired or wireless communications path to enable communications.

Users of the first IP telephony system **120** are able to access the service from virtually any location where they can connect to the Internet **110**. Thus, a customer could register with an IP telephony system located in the U.S., and that customer could then use an IP telephone **108** located in a country outside the U.S. to access the services. Likewise, the customer could also utilize a computer outside the U.S. that is running a soft-phone client to access the first IP telephony system **120**. Further, in some instances a user could place a telephone call with the first analog telephone **132** or first cellular telephone **134** that is routed through the first PSTN **130** to the first IP telephony system **120** via the gateway **122**. This would typically be accomplished by the user calling a local telephone number that is routed to the first IP telephony system **120** via the gateway **122**. Once connected to the first IP telephony system **120**, the user may then place an outgoing long distance call to anywhere in the world using the first IP telephony system's network. Thus, the user is able to place a long distance call using lower cost IP telephony service provided by the first IP telephony system **120**, rather than a higher cost service provided by the first PSTN **130**.

FIG. 1 also illustrates that a second IP telephony system **170** may interact with the first IP telephony system **120** via the Internet **110**. For example, customers of the second IP telephony system **170** may place calls to customers of the first IP telephony system **120**. In that instance, assets of the second IP telephony system **170** interact with assets of the first IP telephony system **120** to setup and carry the telephone call. Conversely, customers of the first IP telephony system **120** can place calls to customers of the second IP telephony system **170**. The second IP telephony system could also interact with the other communications systems via a gateway **172**.

As illustrated in FIG. 1, the second PSTN **140** may be connected to a second analog telephone **174**, a second cellular telephone **176** and a second mobile computing device **178**.

FIG. 2 illustrates elements of a computer processor **250** that can be used as part of the first or second IP telephony systems **120**, **170**, or as part of an IP telephony device, to accomplish various functions. Each of the IP telephony systems **120**, **170**, or an IP telephony device, could include multiple processors **250**, along with their operating components and programming, each carrying out a specific or dedicated function.

The processor **250** shown in FIG. 2 may be one of any form of a general purpose computer processor used in accessing an IP-based network, such as a corporate intranet, the Internet or the like. The processor **250** comprises a central processing unit (CPU) **252**, a memory **254**, and support circuits **256** for the CPU **252**. The processor **250** also includes provisions **258/260** for connecting the processor **250** to customer equipment, to service provider equipment, to IP network or gateways, as well as possibly one or more input/output devices (not shown) for accessing the processor and/or performing ancillary or administrative functions related thereto. The provisions **258/260** are shown as separate bus structures in FIG.

5

2; however, they may alternately be a single bus structure without degrading or otherwise changing the intended operability of the processor **250**.

The memory **254** is coupled to the CPU **252**. The memory **254**, or computer-readable medium, may be one or more of readily available memory such as random access memory (RAM), read only memory (ROM), floppy disk, hard disk, flash memory or any other form of digital storage, local or remote, and is preferably of non-volatile nature. The support circuits **256** are coupled to the CPU **252** for supporting the processor in a conventional manner. These circuits include cache, power supplies, clock circuits, input/output circuitry and subsystems, and the like.

A software routine **262**, when executed by the CPU **252**, causes the processor **250** to perform processes of the disclosed embodiments, and is generally stored in the memory **254**. The software routine **262** may also be stored and/or executed by a second CPU (not shown) that is remotely located from the hardware being controlled by the CPU **252**. Also, the software routines could also be stored remotely from the CPU. For example, the software could be resident on servers and memory devices that are located remotely from the CPU, but which are accessible to the CPU via a data network connection.

The software routine **262**, when executed by the CPU **252**, transforms the general purpose computer into a specific purpose computer that performs one or more functions of an IP telephony system **120/170** or an IP telephony device. Although the processes of the disclosed embodiments may be discussed as being implemented as a software routine, some of the method steps that are disclosed therein may be performed in hardware as well as by a processor running software. As such, the embodiments may be implemented in software as executed upon a computer system, in hardware as an application specific integrated circuit or other type of hardware implementation, or a combination of software and hardware. The software routine **262** of the disclosed embodiments is capable of being executed on any computer operating system, and is capable of being performed using any CPU architecture.

In the following description, references will be made to an "IP telephony device." This term is used to refer to any type of device which is capable of interacting with an IP telephony system to complete a telephone call. An IP telephony device could be an IP telephone, a computer running IP telephony software, a terminal adapter which is connected to an analog telephone, or some other type of device capable of communicating via data packets. An IP telephony device could also be a cellular telephone or a portable or tablet computing device that runs a software client that enables the device to act as an IP telephone. Thus, a single device might be capable of operating as both a cellular telephone and an IP telephony device.

Moreover, certain devices that are not traditionally used as telephony devices may act as telephony devices once they are configured with appropriate client software. Thus, some devices that would not normally be considered telephony devices may become telephony devices or IP telephony devices once they are running appropriate software. One example would be a desktop or a laptop computer that is running software that can interact with an IP telephony system over a data network to conduct telephone calls. Another example would be a portable computing device, such as an Apple iPod Touch™, which includes a speaker and a microphone. A software application loaded onto an Apple iPod

6

Touch™ can be run so that the Apple iPod Touch™ can interact with an IP telephony system to conduct a telephone call.

The following description will also refer to telephony communications and telephony activity. These terms are intended to encompass all types of telephony communications, regardless of whether all or a portion of the communications are carried in an analog or digital format. Telephony communications could include audio or video telephone calls, facsimile transmissions, text messages, SMS messages, MMS messages, video messages, and all other types of telephony and data communications sent by or received by a user. These terms are also intended to encompass data communications that are conveyed through a PSTN or VOIP telephony system. In other words, these terms are intended to encompass any communications whatsoever, in any format, which traverse all or a portion of a communications network or telephony network.

FIG. 3 illustrates selected elements of an IP telephony system **300** in accordance with one embodiment of the invention, although the IP telephony system **300** would include additional elements. The IP telephony system **300** includes a call set up unit **302**, a billing unit **304**, and CDR unit **310**. The CDR unit **310** includes a raw CDR database **312**, a CDR matching unit **314**, and a final CDR database **316**. The way in which these elements of the IP telephony system **300** operate to match CDRs relating to the same telephony communication are discussed in detail below.

As mentioned above, when an incoming telephony communication is received by the IP telephony system **300**, the incoming communication can be routed through multiple elements of the IP telephony system **300**. Several of those elements could generate one or more CDRs for the communication, and each of these CDRs would be forwarded to CDR unit **310** for storage in the raw CDR database **312**. Thus, the raw CDR database **312**, stores multiple CDRs which relate to the same telephony communication.

The CDR matching unit **314** is responsible for matching the multiple CDRs in the raw CDR database **312** that relate to the same telephony communication. In some embodiments, the CDR matching unit **314** then assigns a single global identification number for the communication, and the global identification number is recorded in each of the individual CDRs that have been generated for the communication.

In some instances, the global identification number may be an identification number that was originally assigned by one of the elements responsible for handling the communication. In other embodiments, the global identification number is generated by the CDR matching unit **314**, and then recorded in each of the individual CDRs for the communication.

Once multiple CDRs relating to the same communication have been identified, the CDR **310** unit may generate and store one or multiple final CDRs for the communication in the final CDR database **316**. If multiple final CDRs are generated, they may be linked by a common global call ID number appearing in all of the final CDRs relating to the same communication. The final CDRs could be used by the billing unit **304** to bill a customer or another communication system for handling the communication. Alternatively, information in the final CDR database **316** could be used for other purposes, such as determining the overall path that a communication took as it traversed the elements of an IP telephony system **300**. Such information could be useful in troubleshooting, quality monitoring, service assurance, and for other reasons.

FIG. 4 illustrates various call flow paths which can be traversed by different types of telephony communications. FIG. 4 will be used to explain some typical call flow paths,

and how the CDRs generated by elements of the IP telephony system which handle those call flows can be matched to one another. FIG. 4 is also used to show how at least one call flow will result in the generation of CDRs which are difficult to match to one another.

In a simple inbound termination call flow, a call originates at a first analog telephone 402, and the call is directed to the IP telephony device 452. A customer of the IP telephony system 410 would use the IP telephony device 452. As reflected in FIG. 4, because the first analog telephone 402 receives its telephony service from a publically switched telephone network (PSTN) 404, the call is initially routed to the PSTN 404, and the PSTN 404 forwards the call to an inbound gateway 412 of the IP telephony system 410. At this point, the call would have a first call ID number. The inbound gateway 412 forwards the call on to an inbound routing gateway 414. Before doing so, however, the inbound gateway 412 assigns a second call ID number to the call, and this second call ID number is reflected in the messaging received by the inbound routing gateway 414. From the perspective of the inbound gateway 412, the first call ID number is an ingress call ID number, and the second call ID number is an egress call ID number. The CDR that is generated by the inbound gateway 412 will include the first and second call ID numbers in data fields labeled the ingress call ID and egress call ID, respectively.

The inbound routing gateway 414 then assigns a third call ID number to the call, and forwards the call to an inbound proxy server 430. The inbound proxy server 430 determines the identity of an outbound proxy server 432 capable of communicating with the customer's IP telephony device 452, and forwards the communication to the outbound proxy server 432. The outbound proxy server 432 then terminates the call to the customer's IP telephony device 452 via the Internet 450.

When the IP telephony system 410 operates as described above, the inbound gateway 412 and the inbound routing gateway 414 each generate a CDR for the communication, and the CDRs are forwarded to the CDR unit 420. This CDR unit 420 could be as illustrated in FIG. 3, and include a raw CDR database which stores each of the CDRs generated for the communication.

Both of the CDRs would include an ingress call ID number and an egress call ID number. For example, the CDR generated by the inbound gateway 412 would list the first call ID number originally assigned by the PSTN 404 as the ingress call ID number, and the second call ID number assigned by the inbound gateway 412 would be listed as the egress call ID number. Likewise, the CDR generated by the inbound routing gateway 414 would list the second call ID number as the ingress call ID number, and the third call ID number assigned by the inbound routing gateway 414 would be listed as the egress call ID.

The second call ID number would appear as both the egress call ID number of the first CDR and the ingress call ID number of the second CDR. Thus, a CDR matching unit of the CDR unit 420 can match the first CDR to the second CDR using the call ID number information recorded in the first and second CDRs.

FIG. 4 also illustrates that a considerably more complex call flow can result in the generation of additional CDRs by other elements. For example, assume that the user of the first IP telephony device 452 has instructed the IP telephony system 410 to forward any incoming calls directed to the IP telephony device 452 to an alternate cellular telephone 462, which receives its service from a mobile telephony system 460. As a result, a call originating from the analog telephone

402 that is initially intended for the IP telephony device 452 is ultimately forwarded to the mobile telephony system 460 for termination to the cellular telephone 462.

In this call flow, the first analog telephone 402 generates an outgoing communication which is directed to the IP telephony device 452. Because the first analog telephone 402 receives its telephony service from the PSTN 404, the call is initially routed to the PSTN 404, and the PSTN 404 forwards the call to the inbound gateway 412 of the IP telephony system 410. At this point, the call has a first call ID number. The inbound gateway 412 forwards the call on to the inbound routing gateway 414. Before doing so, the inbound gateway 412 assigns a second call ID number to the call, and this second call ID number is reflected in the messaging received by the inbound routing gateway 414. The inbound routing gateway 414 then assigns a third call ID number to the call, and forwards the call to the inbound proxy server 430.

The inbound proxy server 430, however, knows that the call should be forwarded to the cellular telephone 462. As a result, the inbound proxy server 430 sends the call to an outbound routing gateway 440 with instructions to route the call the cellular telephone 462. The signaling sent from the inbound proxy server 430 to the outbound routing gateway 440 includes the third call ID number that was originally assigned by the inbound routing gateway 414. The outbound routing gateway 440 then assigns a fourth call ID number to the communication and forwards the call on to the outbound gateway 442. The outbound gateway 442 assigns a fifth call ID number to the call, and forwards the communication on to the mobile telephony system 460 for termination to the cellular telephone 462.

When the IP telephony system 410 operates as described above, the inbound gateway 412, the inbound routing gateway 414, the outbound routing gateway 440 and the outbound gateway 442 each generate a CDR for the communication, and the CDRs are forwarded to the CDR unit 420. Each of the CDRs would include an ingress call ID number and an egress call ID number. For example, the CDR generated by the inbound gateway 412 would list the first call ID number originally assigned by the PSTN 404 as the ingress call ID number, and the second call ID number assigned by the inbound gateway 412 would be listed as the egress call ID number. Likewise, the CDR generated by the inbound routing gateway 414 would list the second call ID number as the ingress call ID number, and the third call ID number assigned by the inbound routing gateway 414 would be listed as the egress call ID.

The second call ID number would appear as both the egress call ID number of the first CDR and the ingress call ID number of the second CDR. Thus, a CDR matching unit of the CDR unit 420 can match the first CDR to the second CDR using the call ID number information recorded in the first and second CDRs. In a similar manner, the second CDR generated by the inbound routing gateway 414 can be linked to the third CDR generated by the outbound routing gateway 440 by the third call ID number. Further, the third CDR can then be matched to the fourth CDR generated by the outbound gateway 442 by the fourth call ID number. This process makes it possible to identify all of the CDRs which were issued by various elements for the same communication.

Another type of call flow is an outbound termination call flow. In this type of call flow, a call originates from a customer of the IP telephony system, and the call is sent to a telephony device that is served by some other telephony system. For example, a customer of the IP telephony system using IP telephony device 452 could place an outgoing call to cellular telephone 462. During this call flow, the call setup signaling

would first pass from the IP telephony device **452** to a proxy server **432**. The proxy server **432** sends the call on to an outbound routing gateway **440**. The outbound routing gateway **440** sends the call on to an outbound gateway **442**. The outbound gateway **442** then passes the call off to the mobile telephony system **460**, which completes the call to the cellular telephone **462**.

In an outbound termination call flow, the CDR generated by the outbound routing gateway **440** will not correspond to any CDRs generated by an inbound routing gateway **414**, as occurs for forwarding call flows discussed above. In other words, in the case of a forwarding call flow, the inbound routing gateway **414** will have passed the call to the outbound routing gateway **440**, likely via an inbound proxy server **430**. The inbound routing gateway **414** will generate a CDR for the forwarding call flow which includes an egress call ID. The outbound routing gateway **440** will then pass the call along to the outbound gateway **442**, and it will generate a CDR that has an ingress call ID identical to the egress call ID in the CDR generated by the inbound routing gateway **414**. On the other hand, if the call flow is an outbound termination, the outbound routing gateway **440** will generate a CDR that has an ingress call ID which has been assigned by the IP telephony device **452** which initiated the call. As a result of all these factors, one can identify CDRs generated by the outbound routing gateway **440** which relate to outbound termination call flows by looking for CDRs generated by the outbound routing gateway **440** that have an ingress call ID that does not match the egress call ID of any CDRs generated by the inbound routing gateways **414**. In other words, one reviews all CDRs generated by the outbound routing gateways **440** for a particular time window, looking for CDRs with ingress call IDs that do not match the egress call IDs of any CDRs generated by inbound routing gateways **414** in the same general time window. Any such CDRs must have been generated as part of an outbound termination call flow.

Another call flow type occurs when the IP telephony system receives call traffic from a first telephony service provider, and passes the call traffic along to a second telephony service provider. This call flow type is referred to as a transit flow. For example, in a transit call flow, the PSTN **404** may deliver a call to the inbound gateway **412** of the IP telephony system **410**, and ask that the IP telephony system **410** deliver the call to the cellular telephone **462**. The inbound gateway **412** sends the call to an outbound gateway **442**, and the outbound gateway passes the call off to the mobile telephony system **460**, which completes the call to the cellular telephone **462**. In some instances, the inbound gateway **412** may consult a routing server to determine the best outbound gateway to select. The selection of the proper outbound gateway may be based on cost considerations, quality considerations, and/or other factors. Also, in some embodiments, the inbound gateway **412** may pass the call off to a separate server which determines that the call is intended to a telephony device which is not directly served by the IP telephony system, and which selects an appropriate outbound gateway to use to send the call on to a telephony service provided capable of terminating the call to the called party. The separate server then forwards the call on to that outbound gateway.

In a transit call flow, both the inbound gateway **412** and the outbound gateway **442** will generate CDRs. However, the call ID appearing in the egress call ID field of the CDR generated by the inbound gateway **412** will match the call ID appearing in the ingress call ID field of the CDR generated by the outbound gateway **442**. Thus, it is relatively easy to match the CDRs generated by the inbound gateway **412** and the outbound gateway **442** for the same call.

In an inbound termination call flow, a call received from another telephony service provider is terminated to a customer of the IP telephony system. For example, if the user of the first analog telephone **402** called the IP telephony device **452**, it would be an inbound termination call flow. The call would initially pass from the analog telephone **402** to the PSTN **404**, and then from the PSTN **404** to the inbound gateway **412**. The inbound gateway **412** would pass the call to the inbound routing gateway **414**. The inbound routing gateway **414** would pass the call to an inbound proxy server **430**, and the inbound proxy server **430** passes the call to an outbound proxy server **432**. The outbound proxy server would then terminate the call to the IP telephony device **452** via an Internet server provider via the Internet **450**. In an inbound termination, the only devices which generate a CDR are the inbound gateway **412** and the inbound routing gateway **414**.

In some embodiments, an inbound termination call flow may be received by the inbound gateway **412**, and then passed directly to the inbound proxy server **430**. In other words, in some embodiments, the inbound routing gateway **414** may not be present. In that instance, the only CDR generated for the inbound termination call flow would be the CDR generated by the inbound gateway **412**.

There are, however, some call flows which result in the generation of multiple CDRs which cannot be matched using the call ID numbers in the ingress call ID and egress call ID fields of the CDRs. One example is a transfer call flow. As will be explained below a transfer call flow involves first and second legs. It is possible to use the ingress call IDs and egress call IDs of the CDRs for the first leg to match up the CDRs that relate to the first leg of the transfer call flow. In the same fashion, one can use the ingress and egress call IDs to match up the CDRs generated for the second leg of a transfer call flow. However, it can be difficult to match the first leg to the second leg.

In a transfer call flow, the first analog telephone **402** generates an outgoing communication which is directed to the IP telephony device **452**. The call is initially routed to the PSTN **404**, and the PSTN **404** forwards the call to the inbound gateway **412** of the IP telephony system **410**. At this point, the call has a first call ID number. The inbound gateway **412** forwards the call on to the inbound routing gateway **414**. Before doing so, the inbound gateway **412** assigns a second call ID number to the call, and this second call ID number is reflected in the messaging received by the inbound routing gateway **414**. The inbound routing gateway **414** then assigns a third call ID number to the call, and forwards the call to the inbound proxy server **430**. The inbound proxy server **430** then forwards the call to the outbound proxy server **432** for termination to the IP telephony device **452**.

In some instances, the outbound proxy server terminates the call to the IP telephony device **452** via the Internet, and the call begins. However, the user of the IP telephony device **452** then decides to transfer the call to another telephony device, such as the cellular telephone **462**. In other instances, the outbound proxy server **432** may know that the call should be immediately transferred to the cellular telephone **462**, and the IP telephony device **452** may not even be involved in the call flow.

Regardless, the outbound proxy server **432** then sends a "refer" message to the inbound gateway **412** that originally received the incoming call. The refer message indicates that the call is to be transferred to the cellular telephone **462**. The refer message received by the inbound gateway **412** will include a calling party identifier, a called party identifier, and an identifier for the telephony device to which the call is to be transferred. These identifiers are typically telephone num-

11

bers. Thus, the refer message will include the telephone number of the analog telephone **402** as the calling party identifier, the telephone number of the IP telephony device **452** as the called party identifier and the telephone number of the cellular telephone **462** as the “transfer to” identifier.

When the inbound gateway **412** receives the refer message from the outbound proxy server **432**, the inbound gateway **412** generates two CDRs. It generates a “stop” CDR for the original inbound call leg that extended to the IP telephony device **452**. This basically completes the first leg of the transfer call flow. The inbound gateway **412** also generates a “start” CDR for a new outbound call leg that will extend to the cellular telephone **462**. This is the beginning of the second leg of the transfer call flow. Details of those CDRs will be discussed below.

The inbound gateway **412** assigns a seventh call ID number to the call and sends the call flow to a new inbound proxy server **416**. The new inbound proxy server **416** sends the call on to the outbound routing gateway **440** without changing the seventh call ID. The outbound routing gateway **440** assigns an eighth call ID number to the call and passes it on to the outbound gateway **442**. The outbound gateway **442** assigns a ninth call ID number and passes the call on to the mobile telephony system **460** for termination to the cellular telephone **462**.

Although the call processing described above makes it possible for the call to be transferred from the IP telephony device **452** to the cellular telephone **462**, it is difficult to match up all the CDRs from the first and second legs of the transfer call flow. The refer message that is sent from the outbound proxy server **432** to the inbound gateway **412** does not include a call ID number. As a result, when the inbound gateway generates a CDR that initiates the second outbound leg that extends to the cellular telephone **462**, the CDR lacks a call ID number in the ingress call ID field. This basically breaks the chain of call ID numbers that is otherwise used to match up all the CDRs that relate to the same communication.

More specifically, it is possible to match up the first CDR generated by the inbound gateway **412** and the second CDR generated by the inbound routing gateway **414** because the second call ID number appears in the egress call ID field of the first CDR and the ingress call ID field of the second CDR.

It is also possible to match up a CDR generated by the inbound gateway **412** when it transfers the call to the inbound proxy server **416** and the CDR generated by the outbound routing gateway **440** because the seventh call ID number appears in both CDRs. These two CDRs can also be matched to the CDR generated by the outbound gateway **442** because the eighth call ID number appears in both the CDR generated by the outbound routing gateway **440** and the CDR generated by the outbound gateway **442**.

However, there is no clear link between the first and second legs of the transfer call flow, because the refer message sent from the outbound proxy server **432** to the inbound gateway **412** lacks a call ID number. It is, however, possible to match up the CDRs using different pieces of information in the CDRs.

As mentioned above, when the inbound gateway **412** receives the refer message from the outbound proxy server **432**, it generates a first “stop” CDR for the first leg of the transfer call flow, and it generates a second “start” CDR for the second leg of the transfer call flow that extends to the cellular telephone **462**. Those two CDRs will both include the same calling party identifier and called party identifier. In addition, because the CDRs are generated at essentially the same time by the same element of the IP telephony system—

12

the inbound gateway **412**—certain timing information in the CDRs will also be identical, or very nearly identical.

In some embodiments, the timing information could be a “time-to-transfer” value, which is indicative of the time that elapsed between the point in time when the first call leg began and the point in time when the first call leg ended and the “stop” CDR was generated. This time-to-transfer value will appear in both the “stop” CDR and the new “start” CDR generated by the inbound gateway **412**. More specifically, the time-to-transfer value may be an integer number which basically represents the current state of a counter that is maintained by the gateway. The “stop” CDR generated by the inbound gateway **412** will have exactly the same or very nearly the same counter number as the “start” CDR generated by the inbound gateway **412** for the second outbound leg of the transfer call flow that extends to the cellular telephone **462**.

The timing number (which could be the time-to-transfer value or some other timing value) can be used, possibly in conjunction with the calling party identifier and the called party identifier, to match up the two CDRs. And when those two CDRs are matched, they provide a link between the first and second legs of the transfer call flow, and all CDRs generated for the communication can be linked together.

In still other embodiments, a call group ID number which is assigned by gateway, and which is also stored in a field of the CDRs may also be used to create unique transfer ID numbers which can link the two legs of a transfer call flow.

In some instances, other information could also be used to facilitate the matching of CDRs. For example, a timestamp value in the CDRs could also be used. The timestamp values, in conjunction with the timing value, could be used to uniquely identify the CDRs with respect to all other CDRs that are generated by the elements of the IP telephony system. Thus, adding the timestamp information to the other information may provide a powerful tool to match CDRs for the same communication.

In one embodiment, a first transfer identification number is generated using information contained in the first “stop” CDR that is generated by the inbound gateway **412** for the first leg of the transfer call flow. The first transfer identification number can be based on the calling party identifier, the called party identifier and the counter number in the first “stop” CDR. The first transfer identification number could be created by simply chaining the digits of those three values together in a particular order. Alternatively, the calling party identifier, the called party identifier and the counter number could be combined according to any mathematical formula or transformation to generate a transfer identification number.

Next a second transfer identification number is created using the calling party identifier, the called party identifier and the counter number in the second CDR generated for the second, outbound leg of the transfer call flow. The calling party identifier and the called party identifier will be identical, and the counter number will be identical, or very nearly identical. As a result, the second transfer identification number will be identical to the first transfer identification number, or nearly identical. For these reasons, if a first transfer identification number generated from a first CDR is the same, or nearly the same, as a second transfer identification number generated from a second CDR, we know that the two CDRs relate to the same transfer call flow, and the two CDRs can be used to link the two legs of the transfer call flow.

In reality, the CDRs generated by the elements of the IP telephony systems are constantly flooding in as each of the elements of the IP telephony system act to handle various call flows. Those CDRs are initially held in the raw CDR database

13

312. The CDR matching unit **314** must then try to match up the CDRs belonging to the same communication. Because of the way the system operates, and because of the volume of CDRs involved, it is no simple matter to match up CDRs relating to the same communication, even using the transfer ID number method outlined above.

The inventors envision a process where the CDR matching unit **314** first uses the call ID number matching methods described above to match CDRs relating to the same inbound termination call flows, outbound termination call flows, forwarding call flows, transit call flows and other call flows which generate CDRs capable of being matched from only the information contained in the ingress call ID and egress call ID fields. Once those CDRs have been matched, there will still be a group of unmatched CDRs relating to transfer call flows and other call flows that result in the generation of CDRs that cannot be matched using only the information in the ingress call ID and egress call ID fields. The transfer call ID technique described above would then be used to match up those remaining CDRs.

FIG. 5 illustrates a method that could be performed by a CDR matching unit **314** of a CDR unit **310** of an IP telephony system **300** to match CDRs using the transfer call ID technique. The method **500** begins and proceeds to step **S502**, where a first transfer ID number is calculated or generated using information in a first unmatched CDR. The method then proceeds to step **S504** where another unmatched CDR is selected from a group of unmatched CDRs. In step **S506**, a transfer ID is calculated or generated for the selected CDR using information in the second CDR.

In step **S508** a check is performed to determine if the first transfer ID number is the same, or nearly the same, as the second transfer ID number. If not, the method proceeds to step **S510** to determine if the selected CDR was the last available CDR that was available for matching to the first CDR. If so, the method ends. If not, the method returns to step **S504** and another CDR is selected from a group of unmatched CDRs. The calculation step **S506** and comparison step **508** are then repeated for the newly selected CDR. Steps **S504**, **S506**, **S508** and **S510** repeat in a looping fashion until all unmatched CDRs have been selected and compared, or until one of the comparisons performed in step **S508** indicates that the transfer ID numbers are the same or nearly the same. If this occurs, the method proceeds to step **S512**, and it is determined that the first and selected CDRs are from the same communication. The method then ends.

A method as described above would be repeated until all the unmatched CDRs are matched to another CDR, or until no more matching is possible.

In some embodiments, the transfer ID number is calculated based on the calling party identifier, the called party identifier and a counter number in the CDRs. However, other information could also be used to calculate or generate the transfer ID number. For example, a timestamp value and/or an hour of the day that the CDR was generated could also be used to calculate or generate the transfer call ID number. Also, in alternate embodiments, only the called party identifier or only the calling party identifier could be used. In still other embodiments, it might be possible to use an identifier associated with the "transfer to" party. Virtually any combination of information that is present in both the CDRs could be used to calculate the transfer ID number.

The counter number that is used to calculate the transfer ID number could be representative of an internal time clock of the gateway generating the CDRs, or it could be representative of the duration of the communication that gives rise to the CDRs. In alternate embodiments, the counter number could

14

be representative of other timing information. The important point, however, is that the counter number is likely to be the same, or very nearly the same, in the two CDRs generated by the inbound gateway **412** during a call transfer call flow.

The foregoing descriptions showed how a transfer ID calculated for first and second CDRs can be used to link two legs of a transfer call flow. However, the same basic procedures could be used to link one or more legs of other types of call flows that result in the generation of CDRs that are otherwise difficult to connect.

When one is attempting to match a first CDR to a second CDR which relates to the same communication, one would compare the first CDR to a group of candidate CDRs which are likely to have been generated for the same telephony communication. One can utilize a time window to select a group of candidate CDRs which are to be compared to a first CDR for a telephony communication. The time window would be for a period of time that begins when the first CDR was generated and for a short period of time thereafter.

Although many of the above examples were given with respect to a call which originated from a first telephone, and which was directed to a second telephone, the matching methods described above are not limited to matching CDRs generated for telephone calls. CDRs which are generated in connection with other types of communications handled by an IP telephony system can also be matched to one another in similar ways.

As mentioned above, once all the CDRs that have been generated for a communication have been identified, the information contained in the individual CDRs can be used by the CDR unit **310** to create a final CDR for the communication that is stored in the final CDR database **316**. In some embodiments, information about the call flow type of the communication may be recorded as part of the final CDR. In addition, an identity of the call flow originator and call flow terminator may also be recorded. This information could be used for various purposes, such as assessing the volume of traffic that conforms to each call flow type. Likewise, it can be helpful to know where the call traffic for a certain types of call flow typically originates and terminates.

Although the above described procedures allow one to determine which CDRs relate to the same communication, this information alone is not always indicative of the call flow type of the communication. However, it is often possible to review CDRs to look for information in a CDR that indicates that the CDR must have been generated as part of a particular call flow type. Once one determines that a CDR must have been generated for a communication conforming to a particular call flow type, one can then use the above-described methods to identify all the other CDRs that relate to that same communication. And once all the CDRs for a particular communication have been identified, one can generate a final CDR for the communication that includes the call flow type, as well as the flow originator and flow terminator.

Alternatively, information about the call flow type, the call flow originator, the call flow terminator, and possibly a global call ID number may be recorded in each of the individual CDRs that are generated for a particular communication. Information in the individual CDRs could then be accessed and used for various purposes.

The basic process for generating a final CDR is illustrated in FIG. 6. The method **600** begins and proceeds to step **S602** where the information contained in CDRs generated from a certain element of the IP telephony system is reviewed to identify a "seed" CDR that must have been generated for a communication conforming to a particular call flow type. Once a seed CDR has been identified, in step **S604** the infor-

15

mation in the seed CDR is used to identify all the other CDRs that relate the same communication. In step S606 information in all the CDRs for that communication is used to generate a final CDR for the communication. The final CDR is then stored in the final CDR database 316 of the CDR unit 310. Alternatively, information about the call flow type, call flow originator, call flow terminator and a global call ID could be copied into each individual CDR that was generated for the communication.

A method as illustrated in FIG. 6 would be repeated many times to match all the CDRs generated for multiple communications, and to generate final CDRs for each communication. The review performed in step S602 would look for different types of information in the CDRs depending on the call flow type, as will be explained in more detail below. Also, depending on the call flow type, one would review CDRs generated by different types of elements of the IP telephony system, as will be explained below.

For example, and with reference to FIG. 4, in a transit call flow, the call is first received at an inbound gateway 412 from a first partner carrier. The inbound gateway then sends the call to an outbound gateway 442, which passes the call on to a second partner carrier that terminates the call to the called telephony device. The inbound gateway 412 is typically connected to multiple inbound trunk groups, each of which is connected to a different carrier. As a result, when the call is received on a particular trunk group, the inbound gateway 412 knows the identity of the carrier delivering the call to the IP telephony system 410.

To help identify the call as a transit call flow, and to help identify the partner carrier that delivered the call to the IP telephony system 410, when the inbound gateway 412 creates a start CDR for the communication, the inbound gateway adds a code number onto the beginning of the called number appearing in the called number field of the CDR. A different code is used for calls received over each incoming trunk group. Because each trunk group delivers calls from a different carrier, the code that is added to the called number field is indicative of the identity of the carrier that delivered the call to the IP telephony system.

The code that is added to the called number in the called number field of the CDR can also be indicative of the call flow type. For example, if the inbound gateway 412 receives a call that is not for one of the customers of the IP telephony system 410, this means the call will be a transit call flow. And a certain range of code numbers can correspond to transit call flows, with each code in the range being reserved for a different carrier that delivers transit calls to the IP telephony system 410.

When the CDR unit 310 is reviewing CDRs to identify CDRs that were generated for transit flow communications, as part of a process of generating final mediated CDRs for transit flow communications, the CDR unit 310 can look for CDRs generated by inbound gateways that have a code inserted into the called number field of the CDR indicative of a transit call flow. In some embodiments, the presence of the code in the called number field can be detected by comparing the value in the called number field of the CDR to the value in the dialed number field of the CDR. Normally, the value in the called number field of a CDR will be identical to the value in the dialed number field of the CDR. For transit call flows, however, the inbound gateway 412 will have added a special code to the value appearing in the called number field, which means the value in the called number field will not match the value in the dialed number field. If one looks for the difference between the two values, one can extract the code that was added. And the code that was added will indicate that the CDR

16

is for a transit call flow. The extracted code may also indicate the identity of the flow originator, which is the carrier that delivered the call to the IP telephony system.

As explained above, one can then match the egress call ID in the CDR generated by the inbound gateway 412 to the ingress call ID in the CDR generated by the outbound gateway 442 to match the CDRs generated by the inbound gateway 412 and the outbound gateway 442 for that communication. The CDR generated by the outbound gateway 442 will include information that identifies the carrier to which the call was sent for termination. Thus, the information in the CDRs can be used to generate a final CDR for the communication that includes the call flow type—transit—as well as the flow originator and the flow terminator.

In the case of transit call flows, one looks at CDRs generated by inbound gateways that have a called number that does not match the dialed number. One then extracts the code that was added to the called number field, and this code is used to determine that the CDR is from a transit call flow, and possibly also to determine the identity of the flow originator. Once the seed CDR for a transit call flow is identified, information in the seed CDR is used to identify the other CDRs that relate to the same communication, and information from all the CDRs is used to generate the final CDR for the communication. In alternate embodiments, one could simply look for a special code that has been inserted into a particular field of a CDR to identify CDRs that conform to a particular call flow type. In other words, it may not be necessary to compare the values present in two fields of a CDR to determine that a code has been inserted into one of the fields. Instead, it may be possible to simply search a single field for a particular code that has been inserted into the field by one of the elements of the IP telephony system in order to mark the CDR as being one generated for a communication following a particular type of flow path. This would be the case for both transit flows, as well as other call flow types.

Moreover, the code that is inserted into a field of a CDR to mark the CDR as having been generated for a communication following a particular flow path need not be inserted into a field that is used for other purposes. Instead, an element of the IP telephony system could insert such a code into a field of a CDR that would normally be blank, or which is not being used for other purposes.

Further, the code that is inserted into a field of a CDR could be indicative of not just the flow type of the communication, but other information as well. In the example given above, the code inserted into the called number field is also used to indicate the trunk group from which the communication was received by an inbound gateway. Thus, the code is also indicative of the identity of the telephony service provider that sent the communication to the inbound gateway. In other instances, the code could be indicative of other information, in addition to the flow type of the communication. Still further, a code inserted into a CDR might not be indicative of the flow type of the communication, but rather some other aspect of the communication.

In the case of other call flow types, one can identify the seed CDR in other ways. For example, in the case of an outbound termination call flow, the call will be initiated by a customer of the IP telephony system 410, and the call will be placed to a telephony device served by some other telephony service provider. With reference to FIG. 4, a customer of the IP telephony system 410 using IP telephony device 452 would initiate the call, and call setup signaling would be delivered to a proxy server 432 of the IP telephony system 410 via an Internet service provider. The proxy server 432 would pass the setup request on to an outbound routing gateway 440.

Thus, the first element of the IP telephony system **410** that generates a CDR for such a communication would be the outbound routing gateway **440**. The outbound routing gateway **440** passes the call to the outbound gateway **442**, and the outbound gateway **442** passes the call off to a different telephony service provider for termination to the called party.

As explained above, one can locate seed CDRs for outbound termination call flows by reviewing all CDRs generated by the outbound routing gateways **440** looking for CDRs that have an ingress call ID that does not match the egress call ID of a CDR generated by an inbound routing gateway **414**. Any such CDRs are necessarily a part of an outbound termination call flow.

And once a seed CDR for an outbound termination call flow is identified, the corresponding CDR generated by the outbound gateway **442** for the same communication can be identified by matching the egress call ID of the CDR generated by the outbound routing gateway **440** to the ingress call ID of the CDR generated by the outbound gateway **442**. Information from both CDRs can be used to generate a final CDR for the communication that identifies the communication as being an outbound termination call flow. In this instance, the flow originator may be identified as the Internet service provider that delivered the original call setup request from the customer's IP telephony device **452**. The flow terminator could be identified as the egress trunk group to which the outbound gateway **442** delivers the call for termination, or possibly the identity of the telephony service provider that is connected to that egress trunk group.

In the case of a call forwarding call flow, the call will initially be directed to a customer of the IP telephony system. However, once the call is received, an element of the IP telephony system will determine that the call should be forwarded to some other telephony device which is not served by the IP telephony system. In a typical call forwarding scenario, an incoming call directed to a customer of the IP telephony system **410** is received at an inbound gateway **412**. The inbound gateway **412** passes the call to an inbound routing gateway **414**. The inbound routing gateway **414** passes the call to an inbound proxy server **430**. In some instances, the inbound proxy server may determine that the call should be forwarded to a different telephone number, such as the number for the cellular telephone **462**. In other instances, the call might get passed on to an outbound proxy server **432**, and the outbound proxy server determines that the call should be forwarded to a different telephone number. Regardless, the inbound proxy server **430** or the outbound proxy server **432** passes the call on to an outbound routing gateway **440**. The outbound routing gateway **440** passes the call on to an outbound gateway **442**, and the outbound gateway **442** passes the call to some other telephony service provider capable of terminating the call to the "forwarded to" number.

Under this type of a call flow, the inbound routing gateway **414** or the inbound gateway **412** will generate a stop CDR for the communication that includes a "forwarded to" telephone number. And the forwarded to number will be different from the called or dialed number. Thus, to identify a seed CDR for forwarded call flows, one can review the stop CDRs generated by the inbound gateways and the inbound routing gateways looking for stop CDRs that have a called number or dialed number that is different from the forwarded to number. And once a seed CDR for a forwarding call flow is identified, information in that CDR can be used to identify all the other CDRs for the communication, as described above. All the CDRs can then be used to generate a final CDR for the communication that indicates the communication was a forwarded call flow, and that identifies the flow originator and

the flow terminator. In this instance, the flow originator could be the ingress trunk group from which the inbound gateway received the call. The flow terminator could be the egress trunk group to which the outbound gateway **442** delivered the call for termination to the forwarded to number.

As explained above, it can be difficult to correctly identify all the CDRs that relate to a transfer call flow. Basically, there are two separate legs to the transfer call flow, and it can be difficult to match the first leg to the second leg. However, identifying seed CDRs for each leg is relatively easy.

In the description provided above, we explained that at the end of the first leg of a transfer call flow, the outbound proxy server **432** sends a refer message back to the inbound gateway **412** that initially received the call, asking that the call be transferred to a different number. When the inbound gateway **412** receives the refer message, it generates a stop CDR which includes the "transfer to" telephone number. This basically ends the first leg of the transfer call flow. The inbound gateway **412** also generates a start CDR for the second leg of the transfer call flow, and the start CDR also includes a transfer to telephone number. However, because the inbound gateway **412** received the refer request from an outbound proxy server **432**, the start CDR for the second leg of the transfer call flow will lack an ingress call ID.

To identify a seed CDR for the first leg, one can review stop CDRs generated by inbound gateways looking for stop CDRs that include a transfer to telephone number. One does not want to use the start CDRs generated for the second leg of transfer call flows. So one can filter out and ignore any CDRs that do not include an ingress call ID. Any CDRs generated by an inbound gateway that includes both a transfer to telephone number and an ingress call ID are necessarily CDRs from the first leg of a transfer call flow. And once such a seed CDR is identified, one can use the seed CDR to identify all the other CDRs for the first leg of the same communication.

To identify a seed CDR for the second leg of a transfer call flow, one can again look for CDRs generated by an inbound gateways that include a transfer to telephone number, but this time one will only look for such CDRs that lack an ingress call ID. Alternatively, one could look for CDRs generated by the inbound gateways which have an ingress trunk which is identical to the egress trunk. The ingress trunk group will only match the egress trunk group in the case of CDRs generated in response to a refer message. Any such CDRs having a transfer to telephone number but which lack an ingress call ID, or where the ingress trunk group matches the egress trunk group are necessarily from the second leg of a transfer call flow. And once such a seed CDR is identified for the second leg of a transfer call flow, information in the seed CDR can be used to identify all the other CDRs for the second leg.

Once the CDRs from the first legs and the CDRs from the second legs of transfer call flows have been grouped together, the methods explained above can be used to match up the first and second legs. And once the CDRs from the first and second legs of a transfer call flow have all been identified, the CDRs can be used to generate a final CDR for the transfer call flow.

In some embodiments, each leg of the transfer call flow could be tracked separately, and a separate final CDR could be created for each of the first and second legs. In other embodiments, only a single final CDR may be created for the entire transfer call flow. Depending on which method is used, the flow originator and flow terminator could change.

In the case of an inbound termination call flow, one can locate a seed CDR by looking for CDRs generated by the inbound gateways **412** and/or inbound routing gateways **414** which include an egress call ID that does not match the ingress call ID of any CDRs generated by the outbound rout-

19

ing gateways 440 or outbound gateways 442. Any such CDRs would necessarily be for an inbound termination call flow. Assuming the inbound termination call flow passes through both an inbound gateway 412 and an inbound routing gateway 414, the CDRs generated by both of those elements can be matched to one another because the egress call ID in the CDR generated by the inbound gateway 412 will match the ingress call ID of the CDR generated by the inbound routing gateway. And once all CDRs have been located for an inbound termination call flow, a final CDR for the communication can be generated using information from both CDRs. The call flow type will be recorded at an inbound termination call flow, the call flow originator can be recorded as the trunk group from which the inbound gateway received the communication (or the identity of the telephony service provider that is connected to that inbound trunk group), and the flow terminator can be recorded as the Internet service provider that connected the call to the IP telephony device 452.

The terminology used herein is for the purpose of describing particular embodiments only and is not intended to be limiting of the invention. As used herein, the singular forms “a”, “an” and “the” are intended to include the plural forms as well, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. It will be further understood that the terms “comprises” and/or “comprising,” when used in this specification, specify the presence of stated features, integers, steps, operations, elements, and/or components, but do not preclude the presence or addition of one or more other features, integers, steps, operations, elements, components, and/or groups thereof.

While the invention has been described in connection with what is presently considered to be the most practical and preferred embodiment, it is to be understood that the invention is not to be limited to the disclosed embodiment, but on the contrary, is intended to cover various modifications and equivalent arrangements included within the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for generating a final call detail record (CDR) for a telephony communication that followed a particular type of flow path through elements of an Internet protocol (IP) telephony system, comprising:

reviewing one or more CDRs to identify a seed CDR that was generated for a telephony communication and that has characteristics that would only be present if the seed CDR was generated for a telephony communication that followed the particular type of flow path, wherein the reviewing step comprises one of the following:

reviewing CDRs generated by outbound gateways or outbound routing gateways to identify a CDR in which the value in an ingress call ID field does not match the value in an egress call ID field of any CDRs generated by inbound gateways or inbound routing gateways of the IP telephony system,

reviewing information in CDRs generated by inbound gateways and inbound routing gateways to identify a CDR in which the value of a forwarded to number field does not match the value in a called number field,

reviewing information in CDRs generated by inbound gateways to identify a CDR which includes values in both an ingress call ID field and a transfer to number field, or

reviewing information in CDRs generated by inbound gateways to identify a CDR which includes no value in an ingress call ID field, but which includes a value in a transfer to number field;

20

identifying one or more additional CDRs that were generated for the telephony communication using information in the seed CDR; and

generating a final CDR for the telephony communication using information in the identified CDRs.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the generating step comprises generating a final CDR that indicates the type of flow path that the communication followed through the elements of the IP telephony system.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the generating step further comprises generating a final CDR that indicates a flow originator and a flow terminator of the communication.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the reviewing step comprises reviewing information in CDRs that were generated by a multiple ones of a single type of element of the IP telephony system.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the reviewing step comprises reviewing information in CDRs generated by elements of the IP telephony system to identify a CDR in which a code has been inserted into a field of the CDR to indicate a flow type of the communication for which the CDR was generated.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the reviewing step comprises comparing the values in two fields of a CDR to determine that a code has been inserted into one of the fields.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the reviewing step only comprises reviewing CDRs generated by outbound gateways or outbound routing gateways to identify a CDR in which the value in an ingress call ID field does not match the value in an egress call ID field of any CDRs generated by inbound gateways or inbound routing gateways of the IP telephony system.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the reviewing step only comprises reviewing information in CDRs generated by inbound gateways and inbound routing gateways to identify a CDR in which the value of a forwarded to number field does not match the value in a called number field.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the reviewing step only comprises reviewing information in CDRs generated by inbound gateways to identify a CDR which includes values in both an ingress call ID field and a transfer to number field.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the reviewing step only comprises reviewing information in CDRs generated by inbound gateways to identify a CDR which includes no value in an ingress call ID field, but which includes a value in a transfer to number field.

11. A system for generating a final call detail record (CDR) for a telephony communication that followed a particular type of flow path through elements of an Internet protocol (IP) telephony system, comprising:

means for reviewing one or more CDRs to identify a seed CDR that was generated for a telephony communication and that has characteristics that would only be present if the seed CDR was generated for a telephony communication that followed the particular type of flow path, wherein the reviewing performs one of the following actions:

reviewing CDRs generated by outbound gateways or outbound routing gateways to identify a CDR in which the value in an ingress call ID field does not match the value in an egress call ID field of any CDRs generated by inbound gateways or inbound routing gateways of the IP telephony system,

reviewing information in CDRs generated by inbound gateways and inbound routing gateways to identify a CDR in which the value of a forwarded to number field does not match the value in a called number field,

21

reviewing information in CDRs generated by inbound gateways to identify a CDR which includes values in both an ingress call ID field and a transfer to number field, or

reviewing information in CDRs generated by inbound gateways to identify a CDR which includes no value in an ingress call ID field, but which includes a value in a transfer to number field;

means for identifying one or more additional CDRs that were generated for the telephony communication using information in the seed CDR; and

means for generating a final CDR for the telephony communication using information in the identified CDRs.

12. A system for generating a final call detail record (CDR) for a telephony communication that followed a particular type of flow path through elements of an Internet protocol (IP) telephony system, comprising:

a raw CDR database; and

a CDR matching unit that reviews one or more CDRs to identify a seed CDR that was generated for a telephony communication and that has characteristics that would only be present if the seed CDR was generated for a telephony communication that followed the particular type of flow path, wherein the CDR matching unit performs at least one of the following functions:

reviewing CDRs generated by outbound gateways or outbound routing gateways to identify a CDR in which the value in an ingress call ID field does not match the value in an egress call ID field of any CDRs generated by inbound gateways or inbound routing gateways of the IP telephony system,

reviewing information in CDRs generated by inbound gateways and inbound routing gateways to identify a CDR in which the value of a forwarded to number field does not match the value in a called number field,

reviewing information in CDRs generated by inbound gateways to identify a CDR which includes values in both an ingress call ID field and a transfer to number field, or

reviewing information in CDRs generated by inbound gateways to identify a CDR which includes no value in an ingress call ID field, but which includes a value in a transfer to number field; and

wherein the CDR matching unit also identifies one or more additional CDRs that were generated for the telephony communication using information in the seed CDR, and

22

wherein the CDR matching unit generates a final CDR for the telephony communication using information in the identified CDRs.

13. The system of claim **12**, wherein the CDR matching unit generates a final CDR that indicates the type of flow path that the communication followed through the elements of the IP telephony system.

14. The system of claim **13**, wherein the CDR matching unit generates a final CDR that indicates a flow originator and a flow terminator of the communication.

15. The system of claim **12**, wherein the CDR matching unit reviews information in CDRs that were generated by a multiple ones of a single type of element of the IP telephony system.

16. The system of claim **12**, wherein the CDR matching unit reviews information in CDRs generated by elements of the IP telephony system to identify a CDR in which a code has been inserted into a field of the CDR to indicate a flow type of the communication for which the CDR was generated.

17. The system of claim **16**, wherein the CDR matching unit compares the values in two fields of a CDR to determine that a code has been inserted into one of the fields.

18. The system of claim **12**, wherein the CDR matching unit reviews CDRs generated by outbound gateways or outbound routing gateways to identify a CDR in which the value in an ingress call ID field does not match the value in an egress call ID field of any CDRs generated by inbound gateways or inbound routing gateways of the IP telephony system.

19. The system of claim **12**, wherein the CDR matching unit reviews information in CDRs generated by inbound gateways and inbound routing gateways to identify a CDR in which the value of a forwarded to number field does not match the value in a called number field.

20. The system of claim **12**, wherein the CDR matching unit reviews information in CDRs generated by inbound gateways to identify a CDR which includes values in both an ingress call ID field and a transfer to number field.

21. The system of claim **12**, wherein the CDR matching unit reviews information in CDRs generated by inbound gateways to identify a CDR which includes no value in an ingress call ID field, but which includes a value in a transfer to number field.

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